



Start Smart. Eat Breakfast.

Target Audience

Parents and caregivers

Behavior Objectives

Adults who participate in this activity will be able to:

- Identify quick and easy-to-fix foods to eat at breakfast.
- Commit to eating breakfast most days of the week.

Lesson Overview



20-MINUTE ACTIVITY!

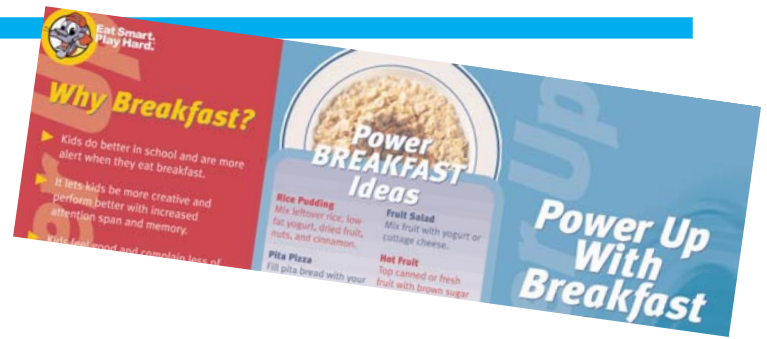
Allow extra time if there are more than 10 participants.

Optional: **Play the Power Panther music** as parents gather.

- The posters *Power Up With Breakfast* and *Be a Role Model... Eat Breakfast with Kids* introduce the topic. As an activity opener, the parents imagine their idea of a healthy breakfast and then the breakfast they really eat most days.
- On the *MyPyramid: Steps to a Healthier You* poster, the parents identify foods eaten for breakfast and discuss what they really eat. The parents compare how the foods in each breakfast fit into the food groups. Later they think of ways to improve or add more variety to their usual breakfast.
- Brainstorm about barriers to eating breakfast. Encourage the group to come up with actions to overcome them.
- Each parent receives the *Power Up With Breakfast* brochure. Using the brochure, they discuss the importance of breakfast, summing up strategies from the brochure for making breakfast a habit.
- At the end of the session, each parent will write at least one action on the brochure that he or she will take in the next week to make sure they eat breakfast. This brochure can be used to share their planned actions with others at home.



Materials



- **Optional: Download** the Power Panther instrumental music to a CD. Arrange to play “If You Wanna Be Like the Power Panther” at the beginning of the session. www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/Collection/collect_kids_3.html
 - **Optional: Make nametags.** Use the Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ round sticker nametags. www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/Collection/collect_kids_2.html
 - **Hang** the *Power Up With Breakfast* posters. Obtain them in advance from: www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/tools_posters.html
 - **Make copies** of the *MyPyramid: Steps to a Healthier You* mini-poster for each participant. To download, go to: www.mypyramid.gov/downloads/MiniPoster.pdf
 - **Provide copies** of the *Power Up With Breakfast* brochure. Order the brochure in advance from: www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/orderform.htm
Or download it from the web at: www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/Files/powerbreak_brochure.pdf
 - **Have something to write on** (large sheet of paper, chalkboard, flipchart, etc.) for the brainstorming session.
 - **Bring pencils** for parents to use.
- * For a bilingual or Spanish-language session, you can order Spanish versions of the *Power Up With Breakfast* poster and brochure from: www.ntis.gov/usda/orderfns.aspx

Background Information for Leaders

Use this information to guide your breakfast session with parents. It is not meant to be presented directly to them.

Starting the day with breakfast is important for everyone. Why? A morning meal gives a head start to the day. Breakfast gives you energy. It helps you stay focused as it is hard to concentrate on an empty stomach. Eating breakfast may help us all feel better, and may help avoid headaches and stomach aches from hunger.

People who eat breakfast may be better able to control their weight. A morning meal satisfies hunger. It is a helpful strategy to avoid overeating at a mid-morning break or at lunchtime. Eating breakfast is a routine habit for many people who have lost weight and kept it off.

People give many reasons for skipping breakfast. For every concern, there is a sensible and easy solution:

- **No time to make breakfast.** *Solution:* Plan ahead. Keep sliced fruit or hard-cooked eggs in the refrigerator.
- **No time to eat breakfast.** *Solution:* Keep quick-to-eat foods on hand: breakfast bars or bagels, small containers of 100% juice, dried or fresh fruit, or yogurt.
- **Not hungry when you wake up.** *Solution:* Eat just a little, perhaps whole-wheat toast, and add some milk to your coffee or tea. Pack fruit or a breakfast bar for later.
- **Do not like breakfast food.** *Solution:* Eat something you like, such as reheated beans and rice, a slice of lean meat, a burrito, or leftover pizza.
- **Think breakfast-skipping helps with weight control.**
Solution: Breakfast-skipping is not an effective way to lose weight. It often results in eating more later. Choose fruit, vegetables, whole-grain and other grain foods with less added sugar or fat, low-fat and fat-free milk or foods made from low-fat or fat-free milk, and beans or lean meats.



Information for Leaders *(continued)*

A good breakfast provides foods from more than one food group. Eating breakfast can help people eat the amounts and kinds of foods recommended by MyPyramid. All kinds of foods can be eaten for breakfast. The best choices include a variety of fruits and vegetables; grain foods, especially whole grains; lowfat or fat-free milk or foods made from milk; and beans or lean meats. Being aware of how much you eat from each food group in the morning and throughout the day will help you know if you get the recommended amounts of foods you need.

Parents need to take care of themselves by eating right. ‘Self-care’ is an important way to show others how to eat a healthy breakfast every day. When parents keep easy-to-fix foods on hand for breakfast and eat a healthy morning meal, children are more likely to be breakfast eaters, too.



Teaching Activities

Optional: Set a lively tone by playing the “If You Wanna Be Like the Power Panther” music as parents gather and fill out their name tags.

1. Start by referring to the *Power Up With Breakfast* poster to help focus on the topic for the session. Ask them to close their eyes and think about:

- A healthy breakfast, or any breakfast, even if they do not commonly eat it.
- Also, think about the food or drinks they *usually* eat in the morning.

2. Give everyone a copy of *MyPyramid: Steps to a Healthier You* mini-poster. **Pass out** the pencils.

—**Have them:**

Identify the types of foods from the MyPyramid food groups that could be part of a healthy breakfast.

Discuss the food or drinks they usually eat for breakfast.

—**Ask:**

- When you were thinking about a breakfast, what food groups do those foods belong to? What food groups do the foods *you really eat* in the

Teaching Activities (continued)

morning belong to? How much would you probably eat of these foods?

- How does the healthy breakfast you thought about compare with your real choices?

— **Go over** some basics about MyPyramid. Point out:

- A healthy breakfast has nutrient-rich foods from several food groups. Any food can be eaten for breakfast. The best breakfast choices include fruits or vegetables; grain foods, especially whole grains; lowfat or fat-free milk or foods made from milk; and beans or lean meats.
- A morning meal helps you get the food you need for the day. Smart breakfast choices help you get the kinds and amounts of food you need from the MyPyramid food groups each day.
- Learning to be aware of how much you eat from each food group in the morning helps you know when and how you are getting the foods you need for the day.



3. Encourage parents to think about their own breakfast habits and barriers. Then brainstorm ideas and ways to eat a healthy breakfast.

- **Ask:** What may keep you from eating the healthy breakfast you described? Keep the discussion open-ended so they talk freely and everyone gets to share his or her thoughts about their own or their family's challenges to eating breakfast.
- **Come up with solutions** for common barriers to breakfast eating, such as those shown below. Use the tips in the Background Information for Leaders as a starting point for discussion.
 - 1—No time to make breakfast.
 - 2—No time to eat breakfast.
 - 3—Not hungry when you wake up.
 - 4—Do not like breakfast food.
 - 5—Think breakfast-skipping helps with weight control.
- **Brainstorm:** For each obstacle named, have the group come up with one easy breakfast idea to help overcome the barrier. The leader can jot down the breakfast ideas from the discussion on a piece of paper, chalk board, or flipchart.

Teaching Activities (continued)

- Ask:** How might you change your breakfasts to make them healthier, or make sure you eat breakfast regularly?
- Distribute** the *Power Up With Breakfast* brochure
- Review the brochure.** It offers simple solutions to make breakfast easier and more fun:
 - Plan ahead
 - Prepare ahead
 - Dare to try new or different foods
 - Change the pace with a different way to eat breakfast

4. Give parents time to plan some actions they might take to make breakfast a regular habit for themselves and family.

- Ask:** During this next week, what can you do to eat breakfast most days of the week?
- Encourage** parents to think about their own barriers to breakfast eating and what steps they might take to make sure they and their families eat a healthy breakfast every day.
- Encourage** them to commit to at least one action they will take to eat a healthy breakfast every day, and then write it down on the brochure. They can take their brochure home with them.
- Reinforce** by referring to the *Be a Role Model...Eat Breakfast with Kids* poster and saying: When parents start their day with a healthy breakfast, children will learn to do so, too. Now you know some ways to get over barriers to eating breakfast – and some easy breakfast ideas. You know actions you can take to make breakfast an everyday habit in your family.



***This may be a
good time to suggest
that parents eat
breakfast with their
children!***

Talk to Parents One-on-One...

If you have time, here is an individualized approach you might want to use.

Often talking with parents one-on-one about healthy breakfasts allows for more personalized advice. Discuss information of interest to them, including what steps they can take.

1. Find out what parents do—and want to learn—about breakfast.

Ask:

- What do you do about breakfast in the morning?
- What often gets in the way of eating breakfast? *Or* what makes breakfast an easy meal for you?
- What would you like to learn that could help you eat a healthier breakfast?

2. Share information related to what parents want to know.

- Go over the messages in the *Power Up With Breakfast* brochure. Focus on what parents said they would like to learn about breakfast.
- Reinforce the importance of setting an example for their children by eating breakfast themselves.

3. Help parents set realistic goals and steps.

Ask:

- What goals could you set to eat a healthier breakfast? Guide them so their goals for breakfast are realistic. Have them write at least one action on the back of the brochure.
- What steps can you take to meet your breakfast goal? Help them choose specific actions, such as having their child help by setting out the cereal bowl and juice cup the night before.

4. Encourage parents to make steps to a healthy breakfast a habit. Remind them to take more steps to move closer toward being healthier, and having a healthier family.

At-Home Activities

As you talk with parents, suggest these activities.

- **Make a Fun Breakfast Together...** Provide parents with the *Power Up With Breakfast kids' activity sheet* (available in English and Spanish). Encourage parents to have the ingredients on hand for the fruit shake recipe and the peanut butter sandwich on the activity sheet and to help kids prepare them. Ask parents to have kids solve the word game, and color the cartoon on the sheet. The finished activity sheet can be used as a breakfast placemat or refrigerator mini-poster.

To view and download the Power Up With Breakfast kids' activity sheet:

www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/kids_activity.html

To order the two-sided breakfast activity sheet (English and Spanish):

www.ntis.gov/usda/orderfns.aspx



Community Activities

- **Bookmark Your Day for Breakfast!** Offer *Power Up With Breakfast* bookmarks to support the power of reading for your school or community reading week, children's author day, or book fair. Or get the message out by passing them out to parents at School Breakfast Week events, or by sending these breakfast bookmarks home with children.

The *Power Up With Breakfast* bookmark is available on-line. To view:
www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect_parent_3.html

You can order it two-sided: English and Spanish. To order:
www.ntis.gov/usda/orderfns.aspx

- **Power Up in the Morning!** Organize a "power up breakfast," and a "power walk" with your church, community group, or other group. Make it as part of a health fair, sports event, or other local festivity. Use Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ clip art in your promotion. Measure a 1-mile "power walk" course. Everyone who participates gets an Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ sticker or bookmark. Make available bagged and portable "breakfasts to go" at the end of the walk. Put an Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ sticker on the bag, or put a *Power Up With Breakfast* bookmark inside the bag. You might find a breakfast sponsor, perhaps a local supermarket.

The clip art, stickers, and bookmark are available on-line. You can order the bookmark two-sided: English and Spanish. To view:
www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect_parent_3.html
and order: www.ntis.gov/usda/orderfns.aspx



Useful Resources



- **Additional Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ Resources:**
www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard
- **Additional Team Nutrition Resources:**
www.fns.usda.gov/tn
- **Additional Federal Government Resources:**
General and specific nutrition information is available from:
www.nutrition.gov
- **The Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion/USDA:**
Find out about the *MyPyramid* Food Guidance System:
www.mypyramid.gov
- **The Food and Nutrition Information Center/USDA:**
Child Nutrition and Health Web sites:
www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/etext/ooooo8.html

Share your success stories with the Food and Nutrition Service by sending news clippings, photos, and event descriptions to your Regional USDA Food and Nutrition Service Office.

For a directory of locations, go to:

www.fns.usda.gov/cga/Contacts/FieldOffices/default.htm